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Le Messager d'Athenes.REPORT ON BULGARIAN RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS

According to a Bulgarian refugee recently interrogated by Greek newspapermen, resistance in Bulgaria is not well organized, largely because the people do not think that the decisive moment has come for an all-out struggle. Yet resistance organizations exist, operating independently of one another.

Recently, in the Bulgarian villages and cities, more and more small groups have been observed, consisting of four or five persons who appear to be plotting. These groups avoid any open anti-Communist actions, but it is said that they attempt to raise the morale of the people, instruct and inform them, and in general, to prepare them for collective action in case of war, arrests, etc. Some of the groups limit their activity to organizing the escape of Bulgarian refugees across the borders. This is no easy task, in view of the tight police control and the large number of agents.

One of the resistance organizations, the Tsar Krum League, consisting of officers, was discovered and most of its members arrested. Another officers' organization, called the Neutralen Ofitser (Neutral Officer) was formed, and it suffered the same fate. A consequence of the liquidation of the Neutralen Ofitser organization was the purge of almost all the pre-Communist officers and noncommissioned officers who still remained in the Bulgarian army.

There are some armed resistance groups in the Stara Planina mountains. The government troops have not succeeded in liquidating them. Fairly large armed groups also operate in the Sredna Gora mountains, but details are lacking on their strength. The largest group appears to be the one in the mountain area south of Pazardzhik. About August 1950, this group fought an engagement, involving considerable numbers, with the police, and 12 policemen were killed.

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During August 1950, there were mass deportations from southern Bulgaria of families who were opponents of the regime. As a result, several persons from the Valigrad area fled to the nearby mountains, where they felt sure of finding armed resisters. To suppress this rebellion, army and police reinforcements were sent from Sofia, Plovdiv, Pazardzhik, and elsewhere. They scaled the heights of Chepenski-Mileva Skala Mountain and the other peaks of the same mountain. Although greatly outnumbered, the anti-Communists succeeded in extricating themselves from encirclement, and had only one casualty.

Other forms of resistance manifest themselves also. Sabotage is so planned as to appear accidental. Depots containing grain collected for government delivery are set on fire and sometimes looted. Murders of Communists occur. Acts of hostility on the part of the population toward the Russians are frequent. Among these is the opposition of Bulgarian Army officers to the Soviet "advisers" and "specialists," which recently brought about a shake-up involving the Minister of the Interior, the Commander of the Third Army, and several others.

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